

In the Drawings:

The attached drawing sheet includes changes to FIG. 1. Please replace the previously submitted FIG. 1 with the attached Replacement FIG. 1.

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicants request acknowledgement of a corrected Form PTO-1449 enclosed herein. The reference JP 05-301300 was inadvertently identified as “JP 05-201300.”

Claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Shimazaki (JP 2001-162693). In response, Applicants amended claim 1 to include the feature of the base portions being fixed with metal-made fixing means to a surface of the loading member, and respectfully traverse the rejection as it applies to claim 1.

New claim 10 is a combination of original claims 1 and 8, and is further amended to clarify the height of the protruding portions. Applicants traverse the rejection of new claim 10 because the cited reference does not disclose (or suggest) some of the protruding portions being lower in height than the remainder of the protruding portions.

Claim 1 now includes the features of original claims 2, 3, and 5. In the outstanding rejection, the Examiner asserts with respect to claim 5 that the metal-made fixing means to the one surface of the loading member does not provide a patentable distinction over the prior art since they are methods of production, and therefore do not determine the patentability of the product itself. Applicants respectfully traverse this statement of the Examiner.

The metal-made fixing means define a particular structure in which base portions of spacers in one surface of the loading member are fixed together by an adhering means and/or metal-made fixing means. In particular, claim 1 calls for a metal-made fixing means intermittently, in addition to an adhering means, in which a winding

liner will repeatedly undergo rolling and unrolling. An example of the metal-made fixing means includes rivets 16, which are shown in FIG. 2 of the present Application. Applicants' use of the metal-made fixing means and adhering means brings about a remarkable result in that spacers becoming disengaged from the loading member can be prevented from occurring, and therefore the durability of the winding liner can be enhanced. (See paragraphs [0024-0025] of the present Application). Since Shimazaki fails to disclose or suggest a metal-made fixing means in combination with the other features of amended claim 1, withdrawal of the §102(b) rejection of independent claim 1 and its dependent claims is respectfully requested.

With respect to original claim 8, the Examiner asserts that drawings 2 and 3 of Shimazaki show a plurality of protruding portions which are located in a winding start part of a winding liner and that the plurality of protruding portions are lower in height than the remainder of the protruding portions. The Examiner identifies the protruding portions as elements 3. While the elements 3 vary in a distance D1 relative to a base plane, the actual physical dimensions of the elements 3 do not vary.

In contrast, as shown in FIG. 9 of the present Application, protruding portions 14M have different heights T_1 , T_2 , T_3 , and T_4 . In particular, the plurality of protruding portions 14M each have a top surface and a height defined by the distance between the top surface and the loading member 11, such that the heights of some of the protruding portions are lower in height than the remainder of the protruding portions, (i.e., T_1 , T_2 , and T_3 being lower in height than the T_4 protruding portions). According to Shimazaki, in order to limit the winding diameter of the liner in an empty non-use state to

be smaller than that in a state of use of the liner, the width of the band-like base plate 2 is gradually increased in the direction of length thereof. However, Shimazaki is silent regarding changing the height of the spacer 3.

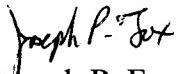
In the present invention, by having the height of the protruding portions located in a wind start part of the winding liner lower than the height of protruding portions in other parts of the winding liner, it is possible to suppress the an occurrence of lateral displacement of the winding liner and prevent collapse of the winding liner which has been wound up. (See paragraphs [0036-0038] of the present Application). Since Shimazaki fails to disclose or suggest this feature, allowance of amended claim 8 and new claims 10-11, which also include this feature, is respectfully requested.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that this Application is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

If a Petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for an extension of time for response is required to make the attached response timely, it is hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for an extension of time for response in the above-identified application for the period required to make the attached response timely. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required to this Application under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 07-2069.

Respectfully submitted,

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